TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH OF:
O F F I C E   A C T I O N
Of   : October 1, 2002
Applicant   : Hewlett-Packard Co.,
Application No.: 101 26 625.1-53

The numbers of the following references are cited in this Office Action for the first time and will be used consecutively throughout the examination proceedings:

1) DE 69324653 T2
2) EP 0189325 A2

I.

The set of claims presently on file is unclear, since, pursuant to Section 34, Subsection 4 of the Patent Act, the invention has to be disclosed in the application in a manner sufficiently clear and complete for it to be carried out by a person skilled in the art. The teaching according to the pending main claim cannot be executed by the person skilled in the art, since it is stated in the description of the present patent application that the information of a dot to be printed can be reduced to one bit (Fig. 2). A detailed description of the method and the precise mathematical formula with the aid of which a person having ordinary skill in the art could execute the device are, however, missing. It follows that, for the time being, the set of claims is not allowable because of lack of a clear technical teaching.

II.

As far as understandable, an image printing device of the

type representing the subject matter of the pending main
claim had been obvious to the person skilled in the art from
the prior art before the date of filing of the present pat-
ent application,
since reference 1 discloses an image printing device (page
1, first paragraph) comprising
- an input for receiving an image data signal in said image
  printing device (page 10, middle, and Fig. 1); and
- a processor in said image printing device for receiving
  and processing said image data signal (page 10, middle,
  and Fig. 1);
wherein
said image data signal contains data specifying location
data for each dot of which an image described by said image
data signal is constituted (page 10, last paragraph to page
11, first paragraph).

In addition, a processor determining the size for each dot
is known from reference 2, which also deals with an image
printing device. This reference discloses that the processor
determines a size for each dot based on dot density data de-
rived from the location data of the image data signal (Ab-
stract and page 2, lines 21-26).

The sum of the features of the main claim can easily be in-
ferred by the person skilled in the art from references 1
and 2. The person skilled in the art will easily obtain the
subject matter of the main claim in this way.

The pending main claim is therefore not allowable, since its
subject matter is not based on an inventive step.

Also the parallel claim 10, which is directed to a method
and the essential steps of which can also be inferred from
references 1 and 2 according to the above-cited text pas-
sages, fails to be allowable for the above-mentioned reasons
because of lack of an inventive step.

The parallel claim 17, which is directed to an image print-
ing device, is not allowable either. In view of the fact
that this claim does not differ from claim 1 with regard to
any feature, the above arguments are applicable to this
claim as well. It follows that also this claim fails to be
allowable because of lack of an inventive step.

Finally, the parallel claim 20, which is directed to a com-
puter program having a program code stored on a media, is
not allowable either, since also the properties of the pro-
gram by means of which the steps of the image printing de-
vice are to be controlled are disclosed by references 1 and
2. It follows that also this claim fails to be allowable be-
cause of lack of an inventive step.

III.

Other patentable particularities cannot be inferred from the
subclaims either.
Claims 2, 11, 18, 22, 4 and 14 are disclosed by reference 1
(especially page 11, second paragraph and Fig. 2).
The features of claims 3, 13, 19 and 21 have already been
described in reference 2 (in particular in the Abstract and
on page 2).
With regard to claims 5 and 15, cf. reference 1 (claim 6).
With regard to claims 6 and 16, cf. reference 1 (page 10,
last paragraph to page 11, first paragraph).
The features of claims 7, 8 and 9, according to which prin-
ters with different technologies are used, are trivial,
since to a person skilled in the art it does not make any
difference which device is used by him for producing a print
on paper.

Summarizing, it can be stated that, at present, a basis for
an allowable set of claims cannot be seen in the present
patent application.

IV.

If the applicant does not intend to prosecute the application, he is requested to submit a short written notice (declaration of withdrawal) or at least an acknowledgement of the receipt of this Office Action.

Otherwise, the applicant is requested

a) to submit a new, clarified set of claims which is limited with regaard to the closest prior art and the main claim of which contains a clear and complete solution in the form of technical means and measures;

b) to state a precise, unequivocally and positively formulated task,

c) to prove that new features which may have been incorporated in the claims are disclosed in the original documents as features which are essential to the present invention, and

d) to explain the advantages of the newly claimed subject matter and to elucidate, in detail, the inventive step in comparison with the proved prior art and the technical knowledge of a person having ordinary skill in the art, as well as

e) to assess the prior art (according to the references) in the description.

If the application is, however, maintained on the basis of an unamended set of claims or on the basis of a set of claims having essentially the same factual content, or if it is maintained without eliminating the above ambiguities, rejection of the application will have to be reckoned with

when the period granted has expired.

Patent Examiner for class G06K

Dipl.-Ing. Kühn

Encl.

copies of references 1 and 2